

## **Update with Public Health and Social Services**

**August 4, 2025**

**3 p.m.**

Present: Commissioner Brummer, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Ryan Barrett, Meja Handlen

Guest(s): Various members of the public and press

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Commissioner Brummer noted that the BOCC likely would not be taking final action on the Consolidated Homeless Grant during the day's meeting.

Rieva Lester read aloud a letter dated July 31 from the Department of Commerce.

Meja Handlen recommended the commissioners approve the contract as received. Meja said it's less expensive to prevent individuals from becoming homeless than it is to help individuals already experiencing homelessness.

Commissioner Swope expressed concerns about overspending regarding the homeless population.

Commissioner Pollock shared concern about losing local control should the county not accept the grant. She noted the county could accept the grant as presented but not use the full amount currently earmarked by Commerce.

Commissioner Swope said Commerce has indicated it would not

Meja said the housing crisis is worsening for the lower and middle classes. She noted that costs have increased for goods and services and that costs related to switching to a cold-weather shelter to a night-by-night shelter have increased costs substantially.

Commissioner Swope said he would like to reduce the Commerce grant by \$1.4 million, for a new total of \$5.157 million. He said Ted \*\*\* from Commerce assured him the county could reduce its received funding and still maintain control.

Meja said Commerce doesn't allow funding to be selected a la cart.

Commissioner Pollock cautioned against trusting Commerce

Meja said staff will provide the commissioners with a 2023-25 line-by-line by provider, line items

Meja said the risk of having Commerce reduce its contract is that the county would not have control over where Commerce would make its cuts.

Commissioner Pollock left at 3:46 p.m.

**Public comment:** The following audience members provided public comment regarding funding for Hope Alliance:

- Jessie Carver
- Kris Camenzind
- Monique Farland
- Kathryn Halson
- Liz Oxford

Meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.